

PRAYING ALWAYS



This will be my last praying always and it will be somewhat different. This quarter we simply ask our readers to come in repentance and faith, and pray for REVIVAL. God can revive personally, congregationally, locally, regionally and nationally. I do not know what he will do, but I do know that I need reviving. The guidance for our prayers comes from 2 Chronicles 7:14.

A Prayer: 'Dear Father, in your love you raised up the Methodist Church, to be a people of Holiness and righteousness, bringing revival to the land. We thank you for all you did for our ancestors. Today we stand in ruins, a remnant of what we once were, and even now we have not turned back to you. We have disobeyed your word; we no longer preach repentance, or believe in Scriptural Holiness. We are no longer making disciples. We confess, with deep sorrow, that we have turned from Your truth, to follow the plans of humankind, rather than the guidance of your Holy Spirit.

Have mercy upon us and forgive us, cleans us from all our unrighteousness, and turn again in mercy to us. Pour out you Holy Spirit once again and revive us. May your presence be known among us, and your salvation once more be shared throughout our nation. Holy Spirit come, though the blood forgives us, and once more bless the Methodist people.' Amen.



2 Chronicles 7:14 'If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.'



1 What can we learn from 2 Chronicles 7:14? The first word is **'If'** and the word 'if,' is a conditional word. If we see the need of our church, if we see the need of our heart, only then will we begin to pray. If we think we are OK, we will not pray for revival. [If we rely on other things our wisdom, our strength, our plans, our church systems, we will not pray.] The first thing is to be aware of is our need. Revival starts with realisation.

2 My people who are **'called by My name.'** God is specific here, it is not the world, or government, who need to change it is his Church. Again, the initiative is in our hands, God is willing, if we are willing.

3 **humble themselves:** The first step humility, not prayer. Repentance and humility must walk together, we need a right assessment of ourselves. We are not called to organise ourselves, or challenge ourselves, galvanise ourselves, rebuke ourselves, blame ourselves, encourage ourselves, or train ourselves. We are called to humble ourselves before God and his word. No humility no revival.

WHAT IS HUMILITY?

It is measuring ourselves against God's word, and seeing that his word is true and we must change. Isaiah 66:2 **"This is the one I esteem:** he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word." **Humility is the opposite of pride,** and pride will always stop God moving. (We can have Pride in our Church, Pride in our Abilities, Pride in our Plans, Pride in our History. 1 Peter 5:5 'All of you, clothe yourselves with humility towards one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'" Christ humbled himself to walk among us, we must humble ourselves to walk with Christ.

Humility is a right assessment of ourselves. We acknowledge our need and our weakness, the failure of our church, our sin and we come before him in an attitude of confession and loving dependence.

4 And pray, God tells his people to pray. Hosea 10:12 'Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, for it is **time to seek the LORD,** Till he comes and rains righteousness on you.' We don't often think prayer is important. James tells us it is our first port of call. 'You do not have because **you do not ask.** You ask and do not receive, because **you ask amiss,** that you may spend it on your pleasures.' James 4:2-3.

Prayer is the challenge of humbly **asking God directly to intervene.** I do not know if God will revive the nation that is a mystery known to God. However, I can come in humility and seek him till he **revives me.** I can call on God with others from my church till he turns and leaves a blessing Joel 2:14.

5 'And seek my face'. His face is different than his power. Exodus 33:18-20 Moses said, **"show me your Glory,"** God replies "you cannot **see my face**". Yet we behold the face of God through the Spirit, in the face of Christ. (See 2 Corinthians 3:13, 18). 2 Corinthians 4:6 'For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.' Seeking God's face is, seeking **his presence,** revival is nothing more, and nothing less than an outpouring of the presence of God, and his presence is Holy.

6 'And turn from their wicked ways'. **Repentance** and Holiness go together. This is not a legalistic holiness, but a love-based holiness. Only God's presence can drive out sin. We cannot 'pray like heaven and live like hell.' We cannot live in opposition to the plain commands of his Word and expect his blessing. If we want God's presence, we do not want sin. We cannot compromise, or rationalise, we need to seek our hearts till we turn from anything that is not godly. Confession, humility, repentance and holiness are irrevocably joined.

REVIVAL IS FOR THE THIRSTY SOUL.

We will not have revival till nothing else will do.

When we do these things, God says, "Then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." He has promised: "I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring." Isaiah 44:3 NKJV.

During these months of deep challenge for our Church and our Nation, let us pray, 'Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down.' Isaiah 64:1

For Israel the promised blessings were physical, a good harvest, safety prosperity, and victory. For us as the Church they are spiritual. Souls saved, Christ honoured, communities changed, God's presence restored, holiness lived and experienced. If we want revival, personal, local or national, God has told us what to do. **"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways,** then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14.

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